



# The value of high-value content

Adding weight and authority to your content marketing mix

Our tips for adding whitepapers, case studies and eBooks to your content marketing mix.

Content marketing is on the agenda for a growing number of businesses today, as more and more organisations recognise the potential returns that well-crafted, optimised and targeted content can bring.

Even a method as simple as maintaining a blog can work wonders for your bottom line. A study from HubSpot found businesses that blog can expect to generate roughly 67 per cent more leads than those that don't.

However, to gain the most out of content marketing's potential, your strategy needs to be diverse and include a portfolio of high value, in-depth content to complement your regular news articles, blogs and social media updates.

So what options do you have when it comes to high value content, and what can they bring to your content marketing mix?





## Whitepapers

Perhaps one of the most commonly known and widely distributed types of longer form content marketing, whitepapers are a must-have for any B2B business looking to enhance its profile and establish itself as the authority in a particular niche.

Whitepapers hold immense value from both a tangible sales point of view and also in a reputational sense. These downloadable assets can act as an effective and measurable lead generation gateway, allowing you to identify and reach potential leads who visit your website. By solving common customer pain points or providing an in-depth commentary on topics that matter to your target audience, you also have the opportunity to establish your business as a thought leader.

Simply put, there are few content types that come close to whitepapers in terms of authority and credibility. According to Eccolo Media's 2014 B2B Technology Content Survey Report, businesses ranked whitepapers as the most influential type of content in the purchase process, ahead of other assets, such as product brochures, making them a useful tool for any B2B website serious about lead generation.

***Our tip:*** like any content asset that you invest a lot of time and effort in, whitepapers need to get you a measurable return. As well as actively promoting them through your blog, website and social media so they get in front of more of the right people, you should consider using your whitepapers to capture website leads. That way, you can immediately get something in return for all your hard work.



## Case Studies

Usually a bit shorter in terms of word count than whitepapers, case studies nonetheless pack a similarly powerful content punch, showcasing your business's real-world success stories and areas of expertise.

The real effectiveness of case studies lies in their ability to demonstrate actual, proven applications and use cases of your product or service. And with no two client experiences being the same, you can have a regular stream of unique and compelling content to rely on. In addition to generating new business opportunities, conducting regular case studies can be another way to strengthen relationships



with your existing clients - and remind them of just how good you are at what you do.

Business decision makers certainly see the value of this form of content, with case studies ranked the second most influential type of content in Eccolo Media's survey. Case studies also came in at second in LinkedIn's 2013 B2B Content Marketing Survey in terms of effectiveness - behind only client testimonials.

***Our tip:*** if you can get your clients to contribute directly to your case studies it can add a really powerful human element. The result can be a more compelling read for target audience than they would get from the traditional "this was the problem / this was our solution" approach. You'll need to make it as easy as possible for your clients to participate, so think about how you go about collecting their contributions (web form, phone canvassing, etc.) and consider if some kind of incentive is appropriate.



## eBooks

Dubbed "the hip sibling of the whitepaper" by HubSpot, eBooks work in a similar capacity, educating your audience on the issues most relevant to them and promoting your business as a thought leader.

The embeddable and downloadable nature of eBooks also makes them similarly effective lead generation tools, and it seems businesses are certainly recognising their merit. According to the B2B Content Marketing: 2014 Benchmarks, Budgets and Trends report from the Content Marketing Institute and MarketingProfs, a third (34 per cent) of B2B marketers use eBooks for content marketing, and well over half (57 per cent) consider them to be an effective method.

With the ability to go longer and more in-depth than whitepapers, and also be more engaging with the use of photography and custom graphics, eBooks are worth considering for businesses serious about generating value for their audience.

***Our tip:*** if you like the idea of hosting an eBook on your website but the thought of creating such a substantial piece of content is a little daunting, then maybe your blog can help. At your next brainstorm session for new blog ideas, see if you can come up with a topic you can make into a series of blog posts. Once you've mapped out a dozen or so headline ideas for your blog series, you've also got the chapters and basic structure for your eBook.

